

CD Duplicators Fear A Blue Christmas

Demand Falls Short Of Increased Capacity

■ BY SUSAN NUNZIATA

NEW YORK—Although their plants are busy, CD replicators say demand is flat when compared with last year's preholiday manufacturing peak.

The manufacturers fear that a rapid post-Thanksgiving drop-off in demand will further cloud a business already facing heightened competition and shrinking profit margins.

The market conditions can be

traced largely to additional capacity that many plants—including those of DADC, CBS, WEA, and Philips Du Pont Optical—have brought on line this year. In some cases, they have increased their output capability by as much as 30%-40%. At the same time, catalog business has faded somewhat and new-release activity has failed to pick up the slack, according to several manufacturers.

"I believe that the market has not grown as much as people had antici-

pated," says Robert Wray, senior VP of marketing for PDO. "What they didn't anticipate were the Mideast crisis and the talk of recession. I don't think it's because there's not good releases out there. There was an expansion [of capacity], but it was in anticipation of more CDs than there actually were."

All of this is good news for the record companies, which are benefiting from lower prices. While raw disc prices continue to hover in the 90-cents-per-unit range, they have sometimes dipped as low as 75 cents per unit since the beginning of the third quarter.

Most plants view the situation as a
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Yeah, That's The Ticket. Members of Fleetwood Mac receive the commemorative Gold Ticket award, representing Madison Square Garden ticket sales of more than 100,000. Fleetwood Mac performed at the Garden five times: June 29-30, 1977; Nov. 15-16, 1979; and Nov. 1, 1990. Shown, from left, are John McVie, Fleetwood Mac; Ned DeWitt, president, MSG Entertainment & Attractions Group; Stevie Nicks, Fleetwood Mac; Ron Delsener, Ron Delsener Enterprises; Mick Fleetwood, Billy Burnette, and Rick Vito, Fleetwood Mac; John Courage, tour manager; Christine McVie, Fleetwood Mac; Rob Light, agent; and Mitch Slater, Ron Delsener Enterprises.

More Top Artists Follow

Madonna's Move To QSound

■ BY CRAIG ROSEN
and SUSAN NUNZIATA

LOS ANGELES—A bevy of top acts including Sting, Janet Jackson, Paula Abdul, Bon Jovi, Freddie Jackson, and Wilson Phillips are set to release product in coming months using QSound—a new technology that gives recordings three-dimensional sound on standard stereo systems.

QSound made its commercial debut Nov. 13 with the release of Madonna's greatest-hits package, "The Immaculate Collection," on Sire/Warner Bros. Each track on the album, save for the two new cuts, "Justify My Love" and "Rescue Me," was re-

mixed using the QSound process. Additionally, there are plans to release QSound-remixed versions of "Justify My Love" and "Rescue Me" as maxi-singles. The video clips for the two new tracks will also use QSound technology.

Sting's "The Soul Cages," set for a late January release on A&M, will feature QSound remixes, as will the forthcoming Janet Jackson video clips "The Knowledge" and "Someday Tonight."

The QSound technology, which is applied to recordings during the mixing process, has been in development for close to a decade in Canada by Ar-

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P'Gram Announces Intent To

Phase Out Its Latin Division

NEW YORK—PolyGram will be phasing out its Latin division in the next few months. According to a laconic announcement made by the company Nov. 14, "Sales and marketing functions for future Latin artists on PolyGram will be handled by the existing department instead of a separate division."

Industry sources say the division may be shut down before the end of the year. The division's head, Norberto De La Rosa, will stay behind for a few months to close accounts and try to license distribution of foreign subsidiaries in the U.S.

According to the announcement, "PolyGram International is also pur-

suing license opportunities for Latin releases." Among the companies already in contact with PolyGram for distribution of its Latin product are Capitol-EMI and CBS.

"We are currently discussing the possibilities of working closely with PolyGram," says Capitol-EMI Latin VP and GM Jose Behar. "I think this will be a wonderful opportunity for Capitol and PolyGram to maximize the potential of this strong artist roster as well as their well-balanced catalog."

The division opened three years ago with the signing of Latin superstar Jose Luis Rodriguez. The depar-

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Mixed Signals For Sound-Alikes

Ryder Loss Leaves Issue In Limbo

■ BY MICHAEL MARTINEZ and
JEFFREY JOLSON-COLBURN

LOS ANGELES—A ruling by a federal judge in Michigan has thrown into legal limbo the issue of performers who imitate famous singers' voices in broadcast commercials, say some attorneys. The attorneys add that there may be no uniform legal standard until one of the appeals of recent decisions on this issue reaches the U.S. Supreme Court.

U.S. District Judge Horace Gilmore of Detroit last week ruled in favor of Molson Breweries, target of a suit by singer Mitch Ryder over use of the song "Devil With A Blue Dress

On," which Ryder had recorded.

Ryder claimed in his suit that a sound-alike singer was used to render a perfect imitation of his voice for the beer commercial.

The Michigan decision runs counter to a California federal court decision last year in which Bette Midler won a \$400,000 award against Young & Rubicam, after bringing suit in 1987. The ad agency had hired a Midler sound-alike for a Mercury Sable commercial (Billboard, Nov. 11, 1989).

In the Midler case it was alleged that the ad agency hired one of Midler's former backup singers to

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Holiday Season Spurs Robust Chart Debuts;

Carey's 'Love' Strong; Wilburys' Disc Travels

WHO NEEDS A calendar? You can tell Christmas is around the corner just by looking at all the activity on the Top Pop Albums chart. Six albums enter the chart above No. 60—more than in any other week this year. And three of those releases are by superstars whose last albums reached No. 1 (Whitney Houston, Phil Collins, and Steve Winwood).

Houston's third album, "I'm Your Baby Tonight," is the top new entry at No. 22. Houston's second album, "Whitney," debuted at No. 1 in 1987, but changes in chart methodology since then make direct comparisons invalid. "I'm Your Baby Tonight" is one of the four highest-debuting albums of 1990. It trails **New Kids On The Block's** "Step By Step," which bowed at No. 14, and **Prince's** "Graffiti Bridge," which opened at No. 21, and ties

George Michael's "Listen Without Prejudice, Vol. 1," which also entered at No. 22. The title track to Houston's album jumps to No. 3 on the Hot 100.

Clint Black's sophomore album, "Put Yourself In My Shoes," bows at No. 48. Black's double-platinum debut release, "Killin' Time," entered the pop chart at No. 130 in June 1989 and peaked at No. 31.

Phil Collins' "Serious Hits ... Live!" opens at No. 49. It's Collins' 10th album since 1980, counting both his solo work and his **Genesis** output but not counting the soundtrack to his film vehicle, "Buster." The man certainly adheres to the work ethic.

Paul McCartney's "Tripping The Live Fantastic" debuts at No. 52. McCartney's 1989 album, "Flowers In The Dirt," peaked at a disappointing No. 21, but the ex-Beatle's simultaneous tour was a box-office smash. This double live album, drawn from that tour, is McCartney's first live release since the three-record "Wings Over America" in 1976.

The Scorpions' "Crazy World" opens at No. 56. The band's last three studio albums reached the top 10. "Blackout" hit No. 10 in 1982, "Love At First Sting" reached No. 6 in 1984, and "Savage Amusement" hit No. 5 in 1988.

And **Steve Winwood's** "Refugees Of The Heart" debuts at No. 57. Winwood's two previous albums, "Back In The High Life" and "Roll With It," reached No. 3 and No. 1, respectively.

FAST FACTS: **Mariah Carey's** second single, "Love Takes Time," logs its third week at No. 1 on the Hot 100 a few months after her debut hit, "Vision Of Love," racked up four weeks on top. Carey is the first act in nearly three decades to spend three or more weeks at No. 1 with each of its first two chart hits. The **Four Seasons** did the trick in 1962 with "Big Girls Don't Cry" and "Sherry," each of

which logged five weeks on top.

Traveling Wilburys' "Vol. 3" vaults from No. 40 to No. 12 in its second week on the pop albums chart. The group's 1988 debut album was also an out-of-the-box hit, reaching No. 12 in three weeks.

The **Cure's** "Mixed Up" leaps from No. 33 to No. 14 in its second week. It's the second-fastest-breaking remix album to date, trailing **Paula Abdul's** "Shut Up And Dance," which was No. 13 after two weeks.

Big Daddy Kane's "Taste Of Chocolate" leaps from No. 82 to No. 37 in its second week. It's almost certain to top the No. 33 peak of the group's 1989 breakthrough album, "It's A Big Daddy Thing."

Elton John's four-CD boxed set, "To Be Continued ...," debuts at No. 135. The retrospec-

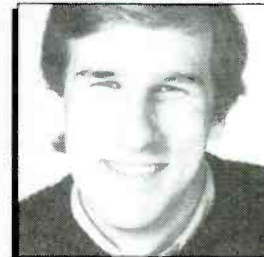
tive is probably the classiest and most lavish boxed set to date. It includes four new songs, one of which, "You Gotta Love Someone," enters the Hot 100 at No. 85. The only downside is that John has already released three greatest-hits sets and three live albums.

"The Best Of The Righteous Brothers" on Curb Records bows at No. 161. It's the duo's third greatest-hits album to make the chart in recent weeks, following compilations on Verve/Polydor and Rhino.

WE GET LETTERS: Noel R. of Milwaukee notes that, despite criticism that pop music is devoid of spiritual consciousness, four current or recent top 10 hits mention God or personal spirituality: **George Michael's** "Praying For Time," **M.C. Hammer's** "Pray," **Poison's** "Something To Believe In," and **Bette Midler's** "From A Distance."

David E. Neukuckatz of Bartlett, Ill., notes that—as of this week—**Billy Joel** has had six albums that have generated three or more top 40 hits. No other act in pop history matches this record. The **Beatles**, **Fleetwood Mac**, and **Daryl Hall & John Oates** each have five albums that spawned three or more top 40 hits ... **Chris Granozio** of WSYR Syracuse, N.Y., adds that Joel's current top 40 hit, "And So It Goes," was the B side of his last two singles, both of which fell short of the top 40: "The Downeaster Alexa" and "That's Not Her Style."

William Simpson of Los Angeles notes that **Danny Kortchmar**, a key figure in the '70s L.A. rock scene, has four songs on this week's Hot 100. Kootch co-produced the old and new **Bon Jovi** hits and both co-wrote and co-produced hits by **Daryl Hall & John Oates** and **Don Henley**.



by Paul Grein